

ELECTRONIC BOOK WITH ENHANCED FEATURES

FIELD OF THE INVENTION

[0001] The present invention relates generally to electronic books.

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

[0002] Electronic books have been provided in which a person can read electronic book files stored on a storage medium in a compact, hand-held housing. Text is presented on a display of the housing, and more than a single electronic book can be stored on the storage medium. In this way, a person can in effect transport a large number of books for reading at the person's leisure in a single lightweight electronic book form factor. As recognized herein, such electronic books can be made even more convenient and user-friendly particularly to aid student study of e-book material.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

[0003] An electronic book includes a housing, a display supported on the housing, and a digital processor in the housing. A tangible computer-reader storage medium is in the housing and is accessible to the processor, and electronic book files are stored on the medium for presentation of text represented by the files on the display. The processor receives user inputs selecting respective portions of an electronic book and copies the portions into an electronic summary document in a sequence in which the portions are arranged in the electronic book. Each portion in the summary document includes location information useful for identifying respective locations in the electronic book in which the portions appear.

[0004] The location information may include a page number and/or a link to the electronic book. In some embodiments the processor automatically initiates an Internet search request using at least one term in a portion in response to entry of the portion into the summary document. The processor can display "N" search results received in response to the search request, and "N" can be defined by a user of the electronic book.

[0005] If desired, the portions entered into the summary document can be associated with respective electronic flash cards responsive to user input.

[0006] In another aspect, an electronic book includes a housing, a display supported on the housing, and a digital processor in the housing. A tangible computer-reader storage medium is in the housing and is accessible to the processor, and electronic book files are stored on the medium for presentation of text represented by the files on the display. The processor receives user inputs selecting respective portions of an electronic book and establishes respective electronic flash cards responsive to user input.

[0007] In another aspect, an electronic book apparatus has an electronically stored electronic book and a processor accessing the electronic book. The processor receives user selections of portions of text from the electronic book. The portions are copied into a summary document by the processor. The processor orders the portions in the summary document in the same order the portions appeared in the book, and the portions in the summary document are accompanied by page numbers or links to the book from which they came so a user can easily refer back to the book at a location corresponding to an interesting entry in the summary document.

[0008] The details of the present invention, both as to its structure and operation, can best be understood in reference to the accompanying drawings, in which like reference numerals refer to like parts, and in which:

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

[0009] FIG. 1 is a perspective view of an example electronic book in the closed configuration;

[0010] FIG. 2 is a perspective view showing the electronic book of FIG. 1 in the open configuration;

[0011] FIG. 3 is a perspective view of an example electronic book with the processor, storage medium, and transceivers shown schematically;

[0012] FIG. 4 is a screen shot showing a user interface (UI) for selecting the summary function;

[0013] FIG. 5 is a flow chart of example summary function logic;

[0014] FIG. 6 is a screen shot showing a user interface (UI) for selecting the flash card function; and

[0015] FIG. 7 is a flow chart of example flash card function logic.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE PREFERRED EMBODIMENT

[0016] Referring initially to FIGS. 1 and 2, an example electronic book 10 is shown that can have, in one embodiment, a foldable configuration to mimic opening and closing a paper book. Specifically, the electronic book 10 may have a rigid lightweight plastic "cover" member 12 joined to a rigid lightweight plastic "back" member 14 along a hinge 16 for movement between an open configuration (FIG. 2), wherein an electronic display 18 of the "cover" member 12 is exposed for viewing, and a closed configuration (FIG. 1), wherein the display 18 is not exposed because it lies flush against the inside surface of the "back" member 14. If desired, an input device 20 such as a keyboard and/or mouse or other cursor control/point and click device may be provided on, e.g., the "back" member 14.

[0017] FIG. 3 shows an example electronic book 22 that may not be foldable in contrast to the book 10 in FIGS. 1 and 2, it being understood that the book 10 shown in FIGS. 1 and 2 may incorporate the features of the electronic book 22 shown in FIG. 3 in, e.g., the "cover" member 12 of the book 10. The electronic book 22 includes a lightweight portable plastic housing 24 bearing an electronic display 26 that may be a touch screen display. Accordingly, if desired the housing 24 may include one or more stylus holders 28 such as plastic clips for holding an elongated rigid typically plastic stylus 30, e.g., vertically on the housing with respect to the "top" and "bottom" of the housing, for use in inputting signals on the display 26 when it is a touch screen display. Without limitation the display 26 may be a liquid crystal display (LCD), light emitting diode display (LED), or other appropriate electronic display technology, and may further include audio display capability, e.g., a speaker.

[0018] Using the input device(s) above a person can enter signals to a digital processor 32 within the housing 24. In turn, the processor 32 can access a tangible computer-reader storage medium 34 such as but not limited to disk-based storage and/or solid state storage to execute logic herein. Electronic book files can also be stored on the medium 34. It is to be understood that the processor 32 controls the display 26 to present user interfaces including a list of titles stored on the